

EPA Region 4 State Beach Program Managers Meeting

When: February 25-26, 2010

Where: Jekyll Island Club Hotel, Jekyll Island Georgia, www.jekyllclub.com

Summary: The BEACH Act of 2000 requires states to monitor their beaches for bacteria and to notify the public when potentially harmful levels of bacteria are found. The purpose of the Act is to protect the health of swimmers at the beach. The Act applies to all states with coastal beaches along the Atlantic, Pacific, Gulf of Mexico, and the Great Lakes. This regional meeting covers the states of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, and Mississippi. The meeting is a chance for stakeholders in these states to get together and address issues of common concern.

Who Should Attend:

Day One – Beach program staff, monitoring and notification partners including local government beach managers, education and outreach, laboratory staff, water samplers, database managers, website managers.

Day Two – All the above and anyone interested in beach water quality issues.

How to Register: There is no charge to attend the conference. Please register by calling or e-mailing either:

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Agenda

Thursday, February 25, 2010. 1pm-5pm – State Beach Coordinators meeting

This day of the meeting is a smaller get-together intended for state Beach Coordinators and others who deal with the “nuts and bolts” of the beach program. Each state will discuss how they address various aspects of the beach grant requirements, including sampling protocols, monitoring logistics, beach tiering, public notification process, signs and advisories, web sites, and data reporting to EPA.

1:00-1:10 Greetings, Introductions

1:10-1:30 Mississippi Beach Program presentation – Emily Cotton, MS DEQ

1:30-1:50 Alabama Beach Program presentation – Mark Ornelas, AL DEM

1:50-2:10 Florida Beach Program presentation – Dave Polk, FL DOH

2:10-2:20 *Break*

2:20-2:40 Georgia Beach Program presentation – Elizabeth Cheney, GA DNR

2:40-3:00 South Carolina Beach Program presentation – Shannon Berry, SC DHEC

3:00-3:20 North Carolina Beach Program presentation – J.D. Potts, NC DNR

3:20-3:30 *Break*

3:30-3:50 EPA National presentation – Lars Wilcutt, EPA *tentative*

3:50-4:10 EPA Region 4 presentation – Joel Hansel, EPA Region 4

4:10-4:40 Roundtable discussion – Program Concerns for SE Region Beaches

4:40-5:00 *Break*

5:00-6:00 Optional Field Trip to Jekyll St. Andrews beach

6:30-? Optional dinner get-together

Friday, February 26, 2010. 9am-3pm – General Meeting with Speakers on Topics of Interest

This day of the meeting is intended for a general audience of interested stakeholders, managers, researchers, and others who are interested in beach water quality issues.

9am-9:30 **Susan Salter, GA DNR EPD**

Use of Beach Monitoring Data for 305b/303d Listing

The Clean Water Act (section 305b) requires states to report water quality conditions to EPA.

How is beach data used in the 305b report to EPA, what is the listing assessment methodology that EPD uses to support Clean Water Act (section 303d) listing decisions, and the EPA Assessment Database (ADB). Description of EPD's TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load) process.

- 9:30- 10am **Joel Hansel**, EPA Region 4
Shellfish Beds Open, Beach Closed – How can this be right?
Two different programs overseen by two Federal agencies on the same piece of real estate can lead to some confusing issues. This discussion will be an overview of both programs, their similarities and differences, and how to handle these between State agencies and the public.
- 10am – 10:30 **Reagan Converse**, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Rapid Methods for Water Quality Management: Assessing the Relationships Between QPCR-based Methods and Existing Methods
A direct comparison of QPCR-based and culture-based enumeration of fecal indicator bacteria from three recreational beaches over the course of two summers demonstrates that while the method results are correlated, they are not equivalent. Preliminary data from lab experiments may explain this lack of equivalency.
- 10:30 – 10:45 *Break*
- 10:45 – 11:15 **Jack Blanton**, Professor Emeritus, Skidaway Institute of Oceanography
Estuaries Surrounded by Marshes: So What's The Problem?
Tidal action forces large water volumes out of the tidal channels of estuaries and into the surrounding marshes. Frictional drag in the marshes retains water there longer than simple models would predict.
- 11:15 – 11:45 **Joan Sheldon**, Dept. of Marine Sciences, University of Georgia
Beach Water Quality Data May Require Non-parametric Analysis
Enterococcus abundance data and some potentially related variables, such as rainfall, have highly skewed distributions with many low values and few high values. The parametric statistical tests that are commonly available in popular software packages cannot be used to examine such data; instead, non-parametric tests must be used and the results must be interpreted carefully.
- 11:45 – 12:15 **Dave Payne**, SC DHEC
Sanitary Surveys for Beaches – Implementation and Results – Year 1
In this session, you will hear how the State of South Carolina included a sanitary survey into their beach monitoring program. Results of the surveys will be presented along with plans for the future.
- 12:15 – 1:15 Lunch on your own
- 1:15 – 1:45 **Tim Wade**, USEPA ORD/NHEERL/HSD/EBB
Health Risks at a South Carolina Beach Impacted by Stormwater Runoff
Most previous health studies at beaches have been conducted at beaches impacted by treated sewage discharge or other human sources. EPA's National Health and Environmental Effects Research Laboratory (NHEERL) and National Exposure Research Laboratory (NERL) conducted an epidemiological study in the summer of 2009 designed to assess the health risks associated with swimming exposure at a beach where water quality was affected primarily by stormwater runoff. Preliminary findings from the summer's research will be presented.
- 1:45 – 2:15 **Richard Zepp**, USEPA National Exposure Research Laboratory
Empirical Modeling of Microbial Indicators for Timely Beach Notifications and Advisories
Public concerns about water quality at beaches have prompted the development of multiple linear regression and other models that can be used to "nowcast" levels of bacterial indicators using hydrometeorological observations. Here we present preliminary results of methods used in predictive modeling studies by the EPA National Exposure Research Laboratory (NERL) at selected marine beach sites in the Southeastern U.S. and Puerto Rico.
- 2:15 - 2:45 **Thom Berry**, SC DHEC, and **Chris Rustin**, GA DCH
Panel Discussion on Notifications, Risk Communication, Talking with the Media and the General Public
- 2:45 – 3:00 **Wrap-up**